

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

PIN: 7036
APPLICANT NAME: West Basin Municipal Water District
PROJECT TITLE: Los Angeles County South Bay Region Implementation Grant
FUNDS REQUESTED: \$49,889,000
COST MATCH: \$41,130,315
TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$91,019,315

DESCRIPTION: The Region represents a highly urban area of more than 2.7 million people accompanied by sensitive beaches and wetlands. This implementation proposal represents the cooperative effort of 30 public agencies and 20 environmental stakeholders. Consistent with the Draft Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (scheduled for a December 2006 adoption), 22 ready-to-proceed projects are proposed in this application. These projects achieve regional objectives, are integrated in nature, and provide multiple benefits by addressing a mix of water management strategies. The objectives of this implementation plan are to enhance surface water quality, replenish groundwater basins, improve water supply reliability, enhance sensitive habitats, and benefit disadvantaged communities.

Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.

Pass

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1. 2

A draft IRWMP is in place and a Final IRWMP is presently under development. A schedule of adoption of a Final IRWMP by December 2006 is provided.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1. 3

A discussion of the region and maps are provided with a focus on water quality. However, there are several information gaps such as current and future water resources, the quantity of water resources within the region, and the water supply and demand for a 20-year planning horizon. The region's ecological processes and environmental resources are not sufficiently discussed. The missing information is identified for inclusion into the final IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1. 4

The IRWMP provides preliminary regional planning objectives developed through sub-regional stakeholder workshops. The applicant indicates that the region's stakeholders are in the process of refining regional objectives in an effort to address major water related issues and conflicts in the region. In addition, the primary objective for each of the projects is identified.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1. 4

The IRWMP describes the range of water management strategies that were considered to meet the objectives of the IRWMP. There is no discussion of why specific water management strategies are not applicable. The water strategies focus on water supply augmentation without a focus on water demand reduction. The applicant discusses how the strategies work together to provide reliable water supply, protect or improve water quality, and achieve other objectives. A limited discussion of the added benefits of integration of multiple water management strategies is provided.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1. 3

A presentation of regional priorities for implementation is provided. The applicant identifies short- and long-term implementation priorities. However, the IRWMP does not discuss how 1) decision making will be responsive to regional changes; 2) responses to implementation of projects will be assessed; and 3) project sequencing may be altered based on implementation responses. It does not appear that the entire region's priorities are fully considered. Some local governments (e.g. Carson, Compton, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, and Lomita) do not appear to have their priorities considered.

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Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The IRWMP identifies specific actions, projects, and studies by which the IRWMP will be implemented and includes timelines for active and planned projects. The applicant identifies the entities responsible for project implementation. Linkages were identified for each project; however, the "linkages" seem to describe project consistencies rather than linkages or interdependencies that determine priority or functionality. Economic and technical feasibility of projects is not demonstrated on a programmatic level and the current status of each element of the IRWMP is not presented. The institutional structure that will ensure plan implementation is discussed. However, there is not a strong connection made with the cities that are included in the proposal in terms of implementing the final IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

2

The criterion is only marginally addressed. The applicant does not describe the benefits to DACs. There is no discussion of how the benefits will be quantified. The applicant presents an approach for determining impacts and benefits, but the actual analysis is will be included in the Final IRWMP.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

2

Applicant does not discuss data, technical methods, and analyses used in selection of water management strategies and there is no indication the Final IRWMP will include a discussion of data, technical methods, and analyses used in selection of water management strategies. The projects and their scientific basis are presented. Table I-1. However, EIRs and Initial Studies seem questionable as to their use in establishing data for technical analysis of a project. There is no mention of data gaps. It is not clear that the Final IRWMP will discuss measures to evaluate project/plan performance; monitoring systems that will be used to gather performance data; or mechanisms to adapt project operation and plan implementation based on performance data collected.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

2

Mechanisms by which data will be managed and disseminated to the public are not provided. Rather, the application states that data management strategies will be developed in final IRWMP. No discussion of how data collection will support statewide data needs is provided and an assessment of the state of existing monitoring efforts for both water supply and water quality is not provided. The final IRWMP needs to include details on how the data management will be accomplished.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

4

Applicant does discuss ongoing support and financing for O&M of implemented projects. O&M cost coverage for proposed projects was part of the prioritization process. The IRWMP does identify IRWMP beneficiaries. The applicant states that the lead agencies for proposed projects have committed to at least a 10% cost match of non-state funds. There is no discussion of other possible financing of IRWMP implementation besides this grant program.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

1

The criterion was not addressed. The IRWMP does not discuss how agency planning documents relate to the IRWMP water management strategies and the dynamics between the two levels of planning documents. There is no discussion of how actions, projects, or studies in the final IRWMP would relate to planning documents established by local agencies. There is also no indication that the final IRWMP would demonstrate coordination with local land-use planning decision-makers. In addition, more involvement from local jurisdictions is needed, especially from the cities within the eastern portion of the region.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The process used for identification, participation, and inclusion of stakeholders in the development of the IRWMP is discussed. The process is presented as part of the draft IRWMP MOU, but procedures for outreach and identification of new stakeholders is absent. Public outreach activities specific to the RWMG are well documented. Environmental justice concerns are not addressed and no discussion of partnerships developed during the planning process is included. Possible obstacles to IRWMP implementation are not identified. Coordination with State and federal agencies is discussed. The IRWMP identifies the regulatory decisions required for implementation. While DACs are discussed in detail, their involvement in the planning process is not discussed. Several stakeholders representing DACs were missing (e.g. cities within the eastern portion of the region).

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Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match.

Pass

Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

9

The application includes a description of the 22 projects for which funding is requested. Each of the 22 projects has its own goals and objectives. The application discusses how the proposal is consistent with the IRWMP and how the projects would fit into achieving the Final IRWMP objectives. However, since the Final IRWMP has not been completed this seems premature. The proposal does not include a plan for compliance with all applicable environmental review requirements. The applicant does not discuss the integration of the proposal with other grant funded projects in the region.

Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.

8

A prioritized list of projects in the proposal and within the region is provided. The proposal includes high priority projects or activities of the IRWMP. However, the prioritization of the projects, activities, and facilities is not sufficiently detailed to understand its relationship to the yet to be completed Final IRWMP. The applicant does not discuss the prioritization scheme for the projects within the eastern portion of the region.

Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.

4

Cost estimates for each project contained in the proposal are included with each estimate showing important budget items such as the cost of land, design, construction, environmental compliance, etc. Determining if the costs are reasonable is not easy and more clarification is necessary.

Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant provides a summary schedule and a schedule for each of the projects showing the sequence and timing of the implementation of each project. However, the applicant does not document that related elements of the IRWMP not proposed for funding will be completed on schedule.

Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The proposal includes a good discussion on the need for each project and how it helps meet long-term regional water management needs. Current water management systems that are in use in the region are mentioned but not documented. Local and regional economic, fiscal, and environmental impacts are discussed in general terms. Impacts from not completing the projects are discussed. Some analyses or estimates regarding reduced water imports, improved quality, etc., should have been provided. Some of the stakeholders within the eastern portion of the region do not appear to have their needs considered.

Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The applicant shows how some of the projects will provide a direct benefit to a DAC. The percentage of DAC population in the region in comparison to the total regional population is estimated at 50%. The applicant does not indicate that significant outreach efforts will be made in the eastern portion of the region where most of the DACs are located.

Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The proposal includes integrated projects with multiple benefits. Generally speaking, the proposed projects support and improve local and regional water reliability and contribute to long-term maintenance of water quality standards. The projects will help reduce pollution in impaired waters and sensitive habitat areas. However, none of the projects serving DACs are safe drinking water projects.

TOTAL SCORE: 78